



File - XP / Cultural
Centres
3731

Excellency,

Mr. Dinesh Singh, Minister of External Affairs in the Government of India, has asked me to transmit to Your Excellency the following message from him :

Dear Mr. Secretary of State, "4th March, 1970.

Ambassador Keating has delivered to me your letter of 27th February, 1970. I am happy that you have written to me in a frank manner about the decision of Government of India relating to the functioning of Libraries, Information and Cultural Centres run by foreign Governments in India. I am replying in the same spirit of frankness.

2. I should like to assure you that it is not our desire to weaken our cultural relations but to continue to strengthen them and to promote better understanding between our two countries. Any impression that may have been given to you to the contrary is not correct.

3. As you may know we are seeking to introduce uniformity in the functioning of Information and Cultural Centres of foreign Missions in India. Our recent decision applies to all countries having Missions in India. It is not directed against the USIS or the Cultural/Information Centres of any particular country. The idea is not to curb cultural relations with friendly foreign countries but to put them on a regular and uniform basis. It is our belief that this effort will enable us to have more meaningful cultural contacts with friendly Governments than has been possible so far.

4. You have referred to "political and other undesirable activities" mentioned by me and my colleague the Deputy Minister in the course of the discussions in our Parliament on 26th February. We did not have any specific Mission or country in mind. We were referring in general to Cultural Centres performing functions which would be beyond the scope of purely cultural activities. I hope this will remove any misunderstanding on this score.

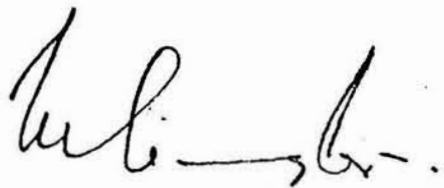
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5. I have already informed Ambassador Keating that we shall be glad to discuss the manner and means whereby we can work more effectively for the objective of strengthening our cultural relations.

Yours sincerely,

Dinesh Singh."

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest esteem.



(M. Rasgotra)
Charge d'Affaires ad interim
of India.

Washington, DC,
5 March 1970.

His Excellency
Mr. William P. Rogers,
Secretary of State,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The seal of the United States Department of State, featuring an eagle with a shield, holding an olive branch and arrows, with a constellation of stars above its head. The text "DEPARTMENT OF STATE" is arched above the eagle, and "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" is arched below it.

TELEGRAM

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MEMORANDUM

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ACTION SS-45

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9303

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ NEW DELHI 2505

EXDIS
SUBJ: CULTURAL CENTERS

REF: STATE 029569

THERE FOLLOWS FULL TEXT OF COPY OF LETTERS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER TO SECRETARY DATED MARCH 4 AND PASSED INFORMALLY TO US MARCH 5 BY MEA JOINT SECRETARY MUTHAMMA:
"AMBASSADOR KEATING HAS DELIVERED TO ME YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 27, 1970. I AM HAPPY THAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN TO ME IN A FRANK MANNER ABOUT THE DECISION OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA RELATING TO THE FUNCTIONING OF LIBRARIES, INFORMATION AND CULTURAL CENTRES RUN BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS IN INDIA. I AM REPLYING IN THE SAME SPIRIT OF FRANKNESS.
"I WOULD LIKE TO ASSURE YOU THAT IT IS NOT OUR DESIRE TO WEAKEN OUR CULTURAL RELATIONS BUT TO CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN THEM AND TO PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. ANY IMPRESSION THAT MAY HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO YOU TO THE CONTRARY IS NOT CORRECT.
"AS YOU MAY KNOW, WE ARE SEEKING TO INTRODUCE UNIFORMITY IN THE FUNCTIONING OF INFORMATION AND CULTURAL CENTRES OF FOREIGN MISSIONS IN INDIA. OUR RECENT DECISION APPLIES TO ALL COUNTRIES HAVING MISSIONS IN INDIA. IT IS NOT DIRECTED AGAINST THE USIS OF THE CULTURAL/INFORMATION CENTRES OF ANY PARTICULAR COUNTRY. THE IDEA IS NOT TO CURB CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH FRIENDLY FOREIGN COUNTRIES, BUT TO PUT THEM ON A REGULAR AND UNIFORM BASIS. IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT THIS EFFORT WILL ENABLE US TO HAVE MORE MEANINGFUL CULTURAL CONTACTS WITH FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS THAN HAS BEEN POSSIBLE SO FAR.

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sect. 3.6

By KW NARA, Date 10/10/01

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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"YOU HAVE REFERRED TO 'POLITICAL AND OTHER UNDESIRABLE ACTIVITIES' MENTIONED BY ME AND MY COLLEAGUE, THE DEPUTY MINISTER, IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN OUR PARLIAMENT ON 26TH FEBRUARY. WE DID NOT HAVE ANY SPECIFIC MISSION OR COUNTRY IN MIND. WE WERE REFERRING IN GENERAL TO CULTURAL CENTRES PERFORMING FUNCTIONS WHICH WOULD BE BEYOND THE SCOPE OF PURELY CULTURAL ACTIVITIES. I HOPE THIS WILL REMOVE ANY MISUNDERSTANDING ON THIS SCORE."

"I HAVE ALREADY INFORMED AMBASSADOR KEATING THAT WE SHALL BE GLAD TO DISCUSS THE MANNER AND MEANS WHEREBY WE CAN WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY FOR THE OBJECTIVE OF STRENGTHENING OUR CULTURAL RELATIONS."

KEATING

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By KU NARA, Date 10/10/01

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